

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims as follows:

1. (original) An austenitic stainless steel which comprises, on the percent by mass basis, C: 0.03 - 0.12 %, Si: 0.2 – 2 %, Mn: 0.1 – 3 %, P: 0.03 % or less, S: 0.01 % or less, Ni: more than 18 % and less than 25 %, Cr: more than 22 % and less than 30 %, Co: 0.04 - 0.8 %, Ti: 0.002 % or more and less than 0.01 %, Nb: 0.1 - 1 %, V: 0.01 - 1 %, B: more than 0.0005 % and 0.2 % or less, sol. Al: 0.0005 % or more and less than 0.03 %, N: 0.1 - 0.35 % and O (Oxygen): 0.001 - 0.008 %, with the balance being Fe and impurities.

2. (original) An austenitic stainless steel which comprises, on the percent by mass basis, C: 0.03 - 0.12 %, Si: 0.2 - 2 %, Mn: 0.1 - 3 %, P: 0.03 % or less, S: 0.01 % or less, Ni: more than 18 % and less than 25 %, Cr: more than 22 % and less than 30 %, Co: 0.04 - 0.8 %, Ti: 0.002 % or more and less than 0.01 %, Nb: 0.1 - 1 %, V: 0.01 - 1 %, B: more than 0.0005 % and 0.2 % or less, sol. Al: 0.0005 % or more and less than 0.03 %, N: 0.1 - 0.35 %, O (Oxygen): 0.001 - 0.008 % and one or more element(s) selected from a group of Mo and W of 0.1 - 5 % in single or total content, with the balance being Fe and impurities.

3. (original) An austenitic stainless steel which comprises, on the percent by mass basis, C: 0.03 - 0.12 %, Si: 0.2 - 2 %, Mn: 0.1 - 3 %, P: 0.03 % or less, S: 0.01 % or less, Ni: more than 18 % and less than 25 %, Cr: more than 22 % and less than 30 %, Co: 0.04 - 0.8 %, Ti: 0.002 % or more and less than 0.01 %, Nb: 0.1 - 1 %, V: 0.01 -

1 %, B: more than 0.0005 % and 0.2 % or less, sol. Al: 0.0005 % or more and less than 0.03 %, N: 0.1 - 0.35 %, O (Oxygen): 0.001 - 0.008 % and one or more element(s) selected from a group of Mg of 0.0005 - 0.01 %, Zr of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, Ca of 0.0005 - 0.05 %, REM of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, Pd of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, and Hf of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, with the balance being Fe and impurities.

4. (original) An austenitic stainless steel which comprises, on the percent by mass basis, C: 0.03 - 0.12 %, Si: 0.2 - 2 %, Mn: 0.1 - 3 %, P: 0.03 % or less, S: 0.01 % or less, Ni: more than 18 % and less than 25 %, Cr: more than 22 % and less than 30 %, Co: 0.04 - 0.8 %, Ti: 0.002 % or more and less than 0.01 %, Nb: 0.1 - 1 %, V: 0.01 - 1 %, B: more than 0.0005 % and 0.2 % or less, sol. Al: 0.0005 % or more and less than 0.03 %, N: 0.1 - 0.35 %, O (Oxygen): 0.001 - 0.008 %, one or more element(s) selected from a group of Mo and W of 0.1 - 5 % in single or total content and one or more element(s) selected from a group of Mg of 0.0005 - 0.01 %, Zr of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, Ca of 0.0005 - 0.05 %, REM of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, Pd of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, and Hf of 0.0005 - 0.2 %, with the balance being Fe and impurities.

5. (currently amended) [[An]] The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 1, wherein the microstructure of the said steel is a uniform grain structure having the ASTM austenitic grain size number of 0 or more and less than 7 and the mixed grain ratio of 10 % or less.

6. canceled.

7. (currently amended) [[An]] The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 2, wherein the microstructure of the said steel is a uniform grain structure having the ASTM austenitic grain size number of 0 or more and less than 7 and the mixed grain ratio of 10 % or less.

8. (currently amended) [[An]] The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 3, wherein the microstructure of the said steel is a uniform grain structure having the ASTM austenitic grain size number of 0 or more and less than 7 and the mixed grain ratio of 10 % or less.

9. (currently amended) [[An]] The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 4, wherein the microstructure of the said steel is a uniform grain structure having the ASTM austenitic grain size number of 0 or more and less than 7 and the mixed grain ratio of 10 % or less.

10-12. canceled.

13. (new) The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 1, wherein, for said steel, a creep rupture time exceeds 10,000 hours under the conditions of 700 °C and a load stress of 100 MPa, the steel having a creep rupture reduction in area of 15% or more.

14. (new) The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 2, wherein, for said steel, a creep rupture time exceeds 10,000 hours under the conditions of 700 °C and a load stress of 100 MPa, the steel having a creep rupture reduction in area of 15% or more.

15. (new) The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 3, wherein, for said steel, a creep rupture time exceeds 10,000 hours under the conditions of 700 °C and a load stress of 100 MPa, the steel having a creep rupture reduction in area of 15% or more.

16. (new) The austenitic stainless steel excellent in high temperature strength and creep rupture ductility according to claim 4, wherein, for said steel, a creep rupture time exceeds 10,000 hours under the conditions of 700 °C and a load stress of 100 MPa, the steel having a creep rupture reduction in area of 15% or more.